

Message Text

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11

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 OMB-01 DRC-01 /105 W
----- 029662

P 180835Z DEC 73

FM USMISSION BERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2750

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY

USCINCEUR FOR POLAD AND OPS PRIORITY

USAREUR FOR POLAD, OPS AND AEAGG-OCO PRIORITY

USELMLO PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L BERLIN 2146

1. AT APPROXIMATELY 2000 LOCAL DECEMBER 15 ROUTINE U.S. PATROL SUFFERED BREAKDOWN IN EAST BERLIN AT COORDINATES UU 919271. SINCE TROUBLE WAS ELECTRICAL IN NATURE IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO RADIO HEADQUARTERS FOR ASSISTANCE, AND ACCORDINGLY CO-DRIVER BEGAN TO WALK BACK TO CHECKPOINT CHARLIE TO REQUEST WRECKER BE DESPATCHED. HE WAS ABLE TO NEGOTIATE SUCCESSFULLY FIRST EAST GERMAN BARRIER AT FRIEDRICHSTRASSE CROSSING POINT, BUT WAS DETAINED BY GUARDS AT SECOND, WHO DEMANDED TO SEE HIS IDENTIFICATION CARD, QUESTIONED HIM CLOSELY, AND REFUSED TO ALLOW HIM TO PROCEED ON GROUNDS HE HAD ENTERED EAST BERLIN BY VEHICLE AND HAD TO EXIT BY SAME MEANS. SOLDIER REQUESTED FIRST THAT U.S. MILITARY POLICE BE NOTIFIED AND THEN THAT SOVIET OFFICER BE SUMMONED, BUT WAS TURNED DOWN ON BOTH COUNTS. HE WAS THEN PHOTOGRAPHED. SOME TEN MINUTES LATER CHECKPOINT CHARLIE WAS INFORMED OF DETENTION BY RETURNING U. S. TRAVELLER, AND MP ENTERED EAST BERLIN CHECKPOINT AREA AND INSTRUCTED DETAINED SOLDIER TO WAIT UNTIL WRECKER ARRIVED AND TO RIDE IN IT BACK TO DISABLED VEHICLE. WRECKER, WITH CAR AND TWO OCCUPANTS IN TOW, LATER PASSED THROUGH EAST BERLIN CROSSING POINT WITHOUT DIFFICULTY.

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2. MISSION CONSIDERED THIS DETENTION A VIOLATION OF ESTABLISHED PROCEDURES GOVERNING FREE MOVEMENT OF ALLIED PERSONNEL THROUGHOUT BERLIN. ACCORDINGLY, MISSION PROTOCOL OFFICER MADE STRONG PROTEST STATEMENT TO SOVIET COUNTERPART ROMANOVSKIY MORNING DECEMBER 17, EMPHASIZING THAT UNIFORM BY ITSELF CONSTITUTES IDENTIFICATION AND THAT EAST BERLIN GUARDS HAVE NO AUTHORITY WHATSOEVER TO CONTROL OR DETAIN IDENTIFIED ALLIED (IN THIS CASE U.S.) PERSONNEL. ROMANOVSKIY CLAIMED THAT EAST GERMANS, IN VIEW OF THEIR SOVEREIGNTY, COULD REQUEST TO SEE ANY FORM OF IDENTIFICATION THEY CHOSE; NORMALLY THEY ACCEPTED UNIFORM AS IDENTIFICATION, BUT THEY COULD DEMAND FURTHER PROOF IF THEY DESIRED. MISSION PROTOCOL OFFICER REJECTED THIS ARGUMENT. ROMANOVSKIY, HAVING MADE CUSTOMARY DISCLAIMER AS TO LACK OF SOVIET EMBASSY ROLE IN MATTER AND BEING REFUTED ON THIS SCORE, SAID HE WOULD ACCEPT STATEMENT FOR INFORMATION.

3. USCOB CONCURS.KLEIN

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